

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 276948

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, NP, US

SUBJECT: NEPALESE CHARGE'S FAREWELL CALL ON ASSISTANT
SECRETARY ATHERTON

1. SUMMARY: DURING NOVEMBER 21 FAREWELL CALL BY
NEPALESE CHARGE RIMAL, ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON
REITERATED U.S. SUPPORT FOR NEPAL'S INDEPENDENT NATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT AND EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR NEPAL'S
INDEPENDENT STAND ON INTERNATIONAL ISSUES. BANGLADESH
ALSO DISCUSSED. END SUMMARY.

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2. NEPALESE CHARGE B.P. RIMAL, ACCOMPANIED BY FIRST
SECRETARY-DESIGNATE SINGHA BAHADUR BASNYAT PAID FAREWELL
CALL ON ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON NOVEMBER 21. DEPUTY

ASSISTANT SECRETARY SOBER AND COUNTRY OFFICER LORTON SAT IN.

3. ATHERTON EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR VERY GOOD WORKING RELATIONSHIP DEPARTMENT HAS ENJOYED DURING RIMAL'S TENURE, PARTICULARLY DURING LONG PERIOD IN WHICH HE HAS SERVED AS CHARGE. IN REPLY, RIMAL EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR COOPERATION RECEIVED FROM DEPARTMENT AND USG INTEREST IN NEPAL. DESCRIBING U.S. PRESENCE IN NEPAL AS "GREAT BOOST

FOR US," RIMAL SAID GON WANTED THIS TO CONTINUE AND "EXPAND." GON ALSO WELCOMES AND APPRECIATES U.S. ECONOMIC COOPERATION, ALTHOUGH RECOGNIZING AN INCREASE IN ASSISTANCE WAS UNLIKELY.

4. ATHERTON REPLIED U.S. HAD ALWAYS APPRECIATED WHAT WE REGARDED AS "WARMEST POSSIBLE TIES WITH THE KINGDOM OF NEPAL," AND ATTACHED IMPORTANCE TO OUR MODEST ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO NEPAL. HE ASSURED RIMAL U.S. CONTINUED TO "SUPPORT INDEPENDENT NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF NEPAL," THAT THIS REMAINS FUNDAMENTAL TO OUR POLICY AND RELATIONSHIP WITH NEPAL.

5. TURNING TO BANGLADESH, ATHERTON SAID WE ARE FOLLOWING DEVELOPMENTS THERE WITH SADNESS AT NUMBER OF LIVES LOST AND NOTED OUR MAIN CONCERN IS THAT SITUATION BE REGARDED AS ESSENTIALLY INTERNAL PROBLEM AND NOT LEAD TO ANY OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE. WE HAVE DISCUSSED SITUATION WITH BENGALIS, PAKS, AND INDIANS ALONG THESE LINES. RESPONDING TO ATHERTON'S QUERY WHETHER HE HAD ANY FRESH IMPRESSIONS OF DEVELOPMENTS IN BANGLADESH, BASNYAT SAID GON WAS CONCERNED AT HOW SITUATION WAS DEVELOPING AND HOPED SITUATION WOULD STABILIZE.

6. BASNYAT COMMENTED THAT AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE KHATRI IS LOOKING FORWARD TO COMING TO WASHINGTON AND IS "KEEN" ON HAVING A MEETING WITH THE SECRETARY. ATHERTON DESCRIBED TIGHTNESS OF SECRETARY'S SCHEDULE FOR CONFIDENTIAL

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IMMEDIATE FUTURE, BUT SAID WE WOULD WELCOME GENERAL KHATRI BACK TO WASHINGTON AND WOULD SEE THAT HIS REQUEST IS CONSIDERED.

7. ATHERTON NOTED SECRETARY AND USG HAVE BEEN DEPRESSED AT SOME TRENDS IN THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY, ESPECIALLY A TENDENCY TO VOTE ON ISSUES NOT ON THEIR MERITS BUT AS A BLOC. HE SAID HE HAD BEEN WATCHING RECENT VOTES IN UNGA AND HAD NOTED NEPAL HAS BEEN INDEPENDENT MINDED. USG REALIZED THIS HAD NOT BEEN EASY IN SOME CIRCUM-

STANCES AND APPRECIATED NEPAL'S STAND. RIMAL AGREED THIS HAD NOT ALWAYS BEEN EASY, BUT WANTED TO ASSURE USG THAT NEPAL IS TRYING TO KEEP NON-ALIGNMENT ON ITS PROPER "TRACK," AND WOULD FORM POLICY ON THE MERITS OF AN ISSUE.

8. SOBER OBSERVED THAT U.S.-NEPAL RELATIONS :AD BEEN COOPERATIVELY HANDLED, THAT THOUGH WE SOMETIMES DIFFERED, WE HAD BEEN ABLE TO TALK OVER SUCH ISSUES AND NARROW OUR DIFFERENCES. HE COMMENTED ON THE DESIRABILITY OF HAVING MORE OPPORTUNITY TO DEAL WITH OTHER COUNTRIES IN SUCH FASHION.

9. RIMAL AND BASNYAT ALSO CALLED ON DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY DUBS NOVEMBER 19 AND IN GOOD CONVERSATION CONVEYED SIMILAR SENTIMENTS OF SATISFACTION WITH STATE OF U.S.-NEPAL RELATIONS. KISSINGER

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